Government in the face of Malaysian crisis involving harassment of 270 IT professionals from India by the Malaysian police;

(b) what hindsight Government had gained over a similar episode involving detention of Indian IT entrepreneur (Managing Director of Polaris) in Djakarta earlier by the Indonesian authorities;

(c) whether the NASSCOM has strongly taken up the matter with Government; and

(d) whether the present Malaysian episode has been found to have links with the Muslim fundamentalists and ethnic Chinese who want to keep away Indian enterprises from Malaysia and other South East Asian countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Government had taken up strongly with Malaysian authorities, the detention of 195 Indian IT professionals. That led to the immediate release of all but 3 deported since for overstay. Malaysian leaders including Acting Prime Minister have expressed regret and apologized over the incident.

(b) Detention of Polaris officials in Jakarta was due to a commercial dispute.

(c) On both occasions, NASSCOM was in touch with Government.

(d) Available facts do not suggest any such linkages.

India's concern on Iraq War

3017. SHRI NATWAR SINGH:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. President had talked over telephone to the Prime Minister before attacking Iraq;

(b) if so, whether India had conveyed its concern to the U.S. President in this regard and advised him not to go for war;

(c) if so, what was his reaction;

(d) whether being a Non-aligned country, India did not consult other non-aligned nations on this issue; and

(e) if so, the steps India had taken to stop this war?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) Prime Minister had expressed deep concern about the war and its consequences, besides reiterating our consistent position that the United Nations Security Council should have decided the future course of action regarding Iraq's compliance with the Security Council's resolutions. The U.S. President conveyed his reasons for the chosen course of action.

(d) India had consulted other non-aligned nations, including during the NAM Summit in Kaula Lumpur in February 2003.

(e) India's public statements and diplomatic engagement, including with the United States, were based on the goal of seeking a peaceful and diplomatic solution within the framework of the United Nations. Although not a member of the UN Security Council, Indian expressed its position in all Open Meetings of the Security Council, including the meeting on 26 March, 2003.

Visit of sikh jathas to Gurudwaras in Pakistan

3018. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to send sikh pilgrims (sikh jathas) for darshan/visit to historical Gurudwaras in Pakistan on the occasion of Vaisakhi;

(b) whether Government have received any representation from the Sikh organisations in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?